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CLARE,  
AN OPERA, IN THREE ACTS,  
as first performed at  
THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN,  
On Thursday, May 8th, 1823,  
By JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, Esq.  
THE OVERTURE AND MUSIC  
(with the exception of the National Airs)  
By HENRY R. BISHOP, Esq.

LONDON:  
JOHN MILLER, 69 Fleet street.  
1823.  
(Price, Two Shillings and Sixpence.)

None of the parties seem to have paid much attention to one of the songs—"Home, Sweet Home"—interwoven with this opera, and introduced chiefly for the reason that the air was at that time a popular national air of Switzerland. Payne revised the proof so negligently that this original copy has "lovely" instead of "lowly thatched cottage," an oversight which he corrected in subsequent editions. The opera, however, was exceedingly popular, and drew crowded houses to witness its performance, one of its attractions being this song of "Sweet Home," which was first sung by Miss M. A. Tree, the eldest sister of Ellen Tree, now Mrs. Charles Kean.

All contemporary accounts unite in representing her as distinguished as a vocalist as her sister was as an actress. An epigram on her by Tuthill has been preserved in the "Table Talk" of Rogers:

"On this Tree, who a nightingale settles and sings,  
The Tree will return her as good as she brings."

At the time when Miss Tree was singing at Covent Garden another sister was a *danseuse* at Drury Lane. Both seem to have awakened the admiration of some poetical spectator, who thus anonymously, but it must be confessed impartially, celebrates the merits of the two sisters:

"Of all the trees that I have known,  
Of pipin, nonpareil, or warden,  
Give me the Tree so sweetly blown—  
The vocal Tree of Covent Garden.  
But would I choose a tender form  
That dances with the elfin train,  
I'd shelter from life's angry storm,  
And seek the Tree of Drury Lane."

We may be glad that the "vocal Tree" of Covent Garden was not wanting, but it was not needed to make "Home, Sweet Home," immediately popular. It belongs to that class of productions where the language in which the sentiments are expressed is level to the meanest capacity, and where the sentiments themselves, striking a kindred chord in our common nature, find an echo in every bosom. Payne had left his native country for one year, and was absent from it twenty. He had often wandered "mid pleasures and palaces" in foreign lands, an exile and a stranger. In a propitious hour the vision of home fell upon him, steeped in colors caught from heaven, and radiant with a dawn of light such

"As fancy never could have drawn,  
And never could restore."

All the thoughts proper to a condition only rendered more lonely by contrasted splendors streamed into his heart, until—subdued, melted, and touched as with a live coal from off the altar—it poured out from its sad experience this immortal song, which now fills the whole earth with its music.

[CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.]

Wilson, the celebrated vocalist, was upset one day in his carriage, near Edinburgh. A Scotch paper, after recording the accident, adds: "We are happy to state that he was able to appear the following evening in three pieces."

## SONG.

### I.

O were I but the morning light,  
The first to glimmer on the grange,  
Unto thy dwelling I would fly,  
Though all the world I had to range:  
And were thy window hid in rose,  
Or dark with dewy eglantine,  
I'd creep among the silent flow'rs,  
That so my first beam should be thine!  
But if I found upon thy brow  
Fair slumber resting, pure and deep;  
And if I found upon thy lip  
The happy smiles that dawn in sleep;  
I would not wake thee with my ray,  
But leave thee with thy vision bright,  
And watch thee from the shadows grey,—  
Were I the light—the morning light!

### II.

Or were I but the latest ray,  
That gives its hue to rock and tide,  
I'd steal from castle and from tree,  
And linger long where thou dost bide:  
The stars I'd challenge as they came,—  
Their light at best is calm and chill—  
But fiercely through my ev'ry vein,  
The ruddy noontide beateth still!  
So would I move thy inmost heart,  
Its deeps would hold my parting glance,  
Thou could'st not lose it 'mong the lamps,  
Nor tread it out in mazy dance!  
And with thy last look blent with mine,  
Then would I sink into the night,  
Whate'er I had of heav'n were thine—  
Were I the light—the ev'ning light!

H. B. F.

## CRYSTAL PALACE BENEFIT CONCERT.

(From the "Times," June 27.)

The claims of the Crystal Palace to take a benefit on its own account found hearty recognition, if we may judge by the enormous audience assembled on Wednesday afternoon in the middle transept and the galleries adjacent, in front of which the great Handel Orchestra exhibits its vast proportions. The orchestra was filled, as had been announced, by some 2,500 singers and players, from among the very best that London itself, and the direct influence of London, could possibly bring together. It was generally known that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales would honor the performance with his presence, and for this reason the regular performances of the day were ushered in by the National Anthem, which employed the combined resources of chorus and orchestra. Shortly after this royal prelude, always so welcome to an English crowd, the Prince of Wales arrived, accompanied by the Prince Teck, the Prince and Princess of Hesse and suite. The royal box in face of the orchestra was to outward appearance much the same as at the Handel Festival, though the fitting up of the interior (designed and superintended by Mr. Wilkinson), was unprecedented for convenience and luxury. The whole of the arrangements, as at the Handel Festivals, were superintended by members of the Sacred Harmonic Society, under the direction of Mr. Bowley, general manager of the Crystal Palace; and the result was precisely the same as that to which the public have been accustomed at the Handel Festivals.

The programme was without parallel for variety of attraction. The first part was devoted to an ample selection from Mendels-

sohn's magnificent oratorio, *Elijah*, which was not only recommendable on its own account but because it presented favorable opportunities of distinction for so many of the principal singers—all of whom, without exception, as well as the members of the orchestra and chorus, and last, not least, their eminent conductor, Mr. Costa, gave, as we are informed, their gratuitous services on this exceptional occasion. Such disinterestedness could hardly have been exercised in a worthier cause. The Crystal Palace has done a world of good for music, and it is only right that at a moment of need musicians should come forward to lend a helping hand to the Crystal Palace. But what added a further grace to this unanimous exhibition of goodwill was the manner in which each individual performer, singer and player alike, went through his task. We do not exaggerate when we say that a finer execution of *Elijah*, or rather those portions of *Elijah* selected for performance, was never heard in this country. The choruses were superb, from "Help, Lord!" sequel to the inimitable orchestral overture, to "And then shall your light break forth," the natural termination of the oratorio and also of Wednesday's performance—one proof among many of the admirable discernment with which the selection was made. We might dwell upon more than one of the choral performances—as, for example, "Baal, we cry to thee!" with its two wonderfully characteristic companions, "Hear our cry," and "Hear and answer, Baal," "Blessed are the men," and "He watching over Israel," which in the delicate observance of light and shade we do not remember to have been surpassed; and last and greatest of all, "Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land," which might bear comparison with the most successful achievements at any of the Handel Festivals; but it is enough to extend that general and hearty commendation which is the just due of a performance almost from first to last irreproachable. The times, too, of each chorus were taken to absolute perfection. How the solo vocal parts were sustained by Mdlle. Tietjens, Mesdames Rudersdorff and Saint-on-Dolby, Messrs. Santley, and Sims Reeves, may easily be imagined. On such an occasion it would be out of place to criticise the performances of these distinguished artists; but, happily, they brought such excellent good-will to their several tasks that, under any circumstances, they would have afforded the most exacting critic very little chance of exercising his functions. Enough that the selection from the two parts of *Elijah*—a very liberal one, including a large majority of the finest pieces—was heard with unqualified satisfaction from beginning to end; and the only regret was that, under such unusual conditions, the whole of the noblest oratorio of modern times could not be presented. The occasional "practices" at Exeter Hall of the "contingent 1,600," representing the quota supplied by London to the Handel Festival Chorus, have borne good fruits.

The second part was miscellaneous. It began with such a performance of Auber's overture to *Masaniello* as would have made its composer twenty years younger could he have heard it. The orchestra, some 450 strong, played as one man, under the energetic beat of a conductor born to sway the movements of vast masses—the orchestral generalissimo of Europe. The effect was "electric." The overture was called for again, amid a storm of applause, and re-